# INTRODUCTION

This compendium of recent pronouncements and actions by a variety of liberal Protestant, Evangelical, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox church groups provides an occasion for taking inventory of major developments relating to key issues in relationships between the Jewish and Christian communities.

As is evident from the size of this document-- which does not pretend to be exhaustive*--a very substantial amount of reflection and activity has taken place among major Christian bodies in the United States and abroad with regard to the following crucial issues on the interreligious agenda: anti-Semitism; conversion and dialogues; Soviet Jewry; Israel, the Palestinians and the Middle East.

Given the fact that a number of Christian bodies have undertaken extensive studies of these problems -- many of which are reprinted or excerpted in this compendium -- the serious student of Jewish-Christian relations will be obliged to consult the original documents before reaching final conclusions. Nevertheless, some summary observations based on the contents of this compendium may be in order:

First: It is evident from our findings that many major Christian bodies -- main-line Protestant, Evangelical, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox -- have in one form or another clearly condemned anti-Semitism and have repudiated the use by any Christian of biblical or theological teachings as the basis of hatred of Judaism or the Jewish people:

> *Supposed theological or biblical bases for anti-Semitism are to be examined and repudiated.*
>
> [*Lutheran Council Statement*]

> *The Jewish people is not damned nor bereft of its election. Their suffering, dispersion and persecution are not punishments for the Crucifixion or the rejection of Jesus. Much care should be taken in instruction and homilies to right*

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* To avoid duplication, Christian statements which have been reprinted or referred to in previous publications of the American Jewish Committee -- including a great outpouring of Christian opinion on the plight of Soviet Jewry -- have not been reprinted here. Publications including these statements or bearing on other issues raised in this compendium are listed as supplementary reading suggestions.

*interpretations of biblical readings, especially of those texts which seem to put the Jewish people in an unfavorable light. [Document on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, Archdiocese of Cincinnati]*

*Christian participants should make clear that they do not justify past injustice done by Christians to the Jews and that there is no tenable biblical or theological base for anti-Semitism and that they themselves wish to be free of it. [United Methodist Statement]*

*...we urge literature-producing agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention to keep all anti-Semitic statements, inferences, implications and innuendos from our literature. [North Carolina State Baptist Convention]*

These findings should assume particular relevance in light of the recent controversy that followed in the wake of several Palm Sunday sermons in Washington, D.C., which involved allusions by prominent Christian clergymen to the "Deicide" charge as well as the notion that Christianity had replaced Judaism. Similar anti-Jewish statements were made by a Greek Orthodox Archbishop in Athens, who also resorted to the classic themes of theological anti-Semitism. Both the Washington experience and the Athens episode reveal that the seeds of theological anti-Semitism continue to remain widely scattered and give birth to foul weeds, often in the most unexpected places. At the same time these two episodes underscore the importance of the contribution that is being made by the major national Protestant and Roman Catholic bodies who have sought to come to grips with Christian anti-Semitism in the studies and the declarations which are noted in this document. In the last analysis, the true value of these documents will be tested by the degree to which they enter into the consciousness and behavior of the thousands of "persons in the pews" to whom they are addressed.

Second: In the understanding that authentic dialogue must be based on an acceptance of the integrity of another's faith, a number of Christian bodies have repudiated efforts to convert Jews in the context of the dialogue. A few Christian theologians have moved beyond this prgamatic egalitarianism to assert that Judaism is a permanent source of truth for Jews, and that Christians should abandon all attempts at converting them. Yet there are counter trends as well, evidenced by such nationwide evangelistic campaigns as Explo '72 which convened in Dallas this June, and Key '73, a year-long evangelistic emphasis which appears to be developing into an ecumenical program. In addition to these campaigns -- which are not specifically directed to Jews -- there has been a marked increase in the efforts of those missionary groups which specifically aim at the conversion of Jews.

As a matter of freedom of conscience the Jewish community recognizes the inherent right not only of Christians but of all religious communities to propagate their faith and to seek converts. In America's pluralistic society, efforts to persuade another of one's own truth is both a civic and religious right, and one that is open to two-way traffic. What is most objectionable to Jews is that these missionary approaches are frequently based on a stereotyped and caricatured depiction of Judaism as a dessicated fossil which has been replaced by the "new Israel" of Christianity. Such a view is not only untrue to the facts, but is also a moral offense against the dignity and the honor of the Jewish people. Thus, the forthcoming evangelistic campaigns may well become a source of tension and conflict if they ignore the living reality of Judaism as a source of fundamental truth and value to its adherents.

Third: The response of Christian bodies to the plight of the three million Jews in the Soviet Union in recent months has been one of the most heartening and positive developments that has resulted from the extensive growth and dialogue between Jews and Christians over the past decades. There are two aspects of this Christian response to the human rights struggle of Soviet Jewry that deserve to be kept in mind: first,in the process of identifying themselves with the plight of Soviet Jews, Christians have become increasingly sensitive to the discrimination and denial of human rights of other Christian, religious groups and national communities in the Soviet Union. Thus, the struggle for justice in behalf of Soviet Jewry has become inextricably linked with the struggle for justice and human rights for many others in the Soviet Union. Second, the widening involvement of Christian leaders in the Soviet Jewish struggle climaxed by the formidable outpouring of Christian sentiment at the National Interreligious Consultation for Soviet Jewry, demonstrates that there is now an American concensus in support of the need for continued championing of the rights of Soviet Jews and other religious and national groups.

Fourth: The growing positive shift in sentiment in the Christian community with regard to the security of the State of Israel, a balanced perspective on the rights of Palestinians, the future of a unified Jerusalem, is among the most interesting and instructive developments in interreligious relationships in recent years. Following The Six Day War, it became evident in the Jewish community that the vast majority of the Roman Catholic Church and her communicants, and the conservative Protestant and evangelical church bodies understood for a variety of different reasons the threat at that time to the survival of the Jewish people of Israel with whom they identified in forthright and unambiguous ways. Much of that support continues to obtain to this day. The appreciative response

of many in the Jewish community to that demonstration of concern and support by Roman Catholics and Evangelicals is reflected in the continued dynamic growth in relationships between representatives of both these major communities.

The failure of many in the liberal Protestant church bodies to understand the depth of Jewish anxiety over Israel led in the aftermath of 1967 to a genuine rupture in relationships between mainline Protestants and Jews. That break was traumatic for many in the Jewish community for a variety of reasons -- Jews themselves were overwhelmingly liberal and internationalist in their commitments and felt that liberal Protestants were their natural allies. The liberal Protestant ethos was a major influence in establishing religious pluralism, dialogue and religious liberty. The failure of liberal Protestant leadership to understand the importance of the nationalism of Israel, as they readily understand every third world nation, was depressing to many Jews and resulted in a genuine withdrawal from coalitions and other cooperative activities on the domestic scene.

During the past two years the American Jewish Committee -- among others -- undertook to seek to reverse this trend and began a series of quiet dialogues with major mainline Protestant denominations. Following the sorting out of much misunderstanding on both sides, it is evident that a substantial number of liberal Protestant leaders have sought to create a new approach in their relationships with the Jewish community and in their attitude towards Israel. The most dramatic expression of this effort is to be found in the impressive study document of the Middle East Task Force of the United Presbyterian Church. Turning away from what heretofore had been a one-sided support of the Arab cause, the United Presbyterian position is epitomized in this conclusion:

> *The way to peace there [in the Middle East], as here, lies not through partisanship and polarization but through reconciliation. Shalom. Salaam.*

Similarly, the action of the National Council of Churches whose general board received a study document on Jerusalem which rejected proposals for the internationalization of the city reflects an important new tendency in liberal mainstream Protestant efforts toward reconciliation between Jew, Christians and Muslims.

While it would be simplistic and naive to leave the implication that critical and difficult issues do not continue in relationships between Jews and Christians, it is warranted to say that these major developments provide the basis for developing friendships, new understanding and, hopefully, renewed coalitions, reciprocal respect without which there will never be civic peace or international harmony.

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## STATEMENTS AND GUIDELINES ON JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS

A statement prepared in the interest of finding a common Lutheran position on Christian-Jewish relationships, which encourages conversation on the local level between members of the two faiths, was submitted to the executive committee of the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. on April 15-16, 1971, for transmittal to the presidents of the three bodies participating in the cooperative agency--Lutheran Church of America, Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and American Lutheran Church. The statement which follows was drawn up by the Division of Theological Studies of the Council:

### *SOME OBSERVATIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN LUTHERANS AND JEWS*

*Improved relationships among separated Christian churches in recent decades have also led to growing conversation between Jewish and Christian groups. We commend all endeavors which seek greater understanding, mutual confidence, elimination of tensions, and cooperation in the quest for justice and peace, and note statements issued by Lutheran groups which are helpful in these areas.**

*Amid the pluralism of American society today and in the face of many practical problems facing Christians, Jews and all men of goodwill, it is especially necessary to foster and expand such conversations on more local levels, as a contribution to community understanding and cooperation, to heal wounds of the past, and to understand better our common heritage and common humanity. Today the mission of the church surely includes such conversations, and indeed must often begin with them. We urge Lutheran pastors, people and institutions to seek greater involvement in such endeavors.*

*The Christian cannot fully understand what it means to be Jewish but our common ground in humanity and in the Hebrew Scriptures makes a base for beginning. In order to have authentic relationships there must be honesty, openness, frankness, and mutual respect along with a recognition of the real differences that exist and a willingness to risk confronting these differences.*

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* *THE CHURCH AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE*, Logumklster 1964 and Geneva 1969, from the Lutheran World Federation, and the papers on *LAW AND GRACE* and *ELECTION AND THE PEOPLE OF GOD*, from a colloquium sponsored by the American Jewish Committee and the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. [See *LUTHERAN QUARTERLY XXI (1969), 401-459, 501; JOURNAL OF ECUMENICAL STUDIES VIII,2 (Spring, 1971)*]

*To these ends we offer some practical suggestions and make some observations as to methods so that conversations may be both honest and fruitful:*

1. *In localities where Lutherans are comparatively few in number, they are encouraged to cooperate with other Christian groups in initiating and sustaining conversation with Jews.*

2. *Where Lutherans comprise a substantial group within a locality, they are encouraged to take the initiative in fostering conversation and community understanding.*

3. *Meetings should be jointly planned so as to avoid any suspicion of proselyting and to lessen the danger of offense through lack of sensitivity or accurate information about the other group.*

4. *Because of the long history of alienation between the two groups, Christians and Jews should remember that one meeting does little more than set the stage for serious conversations. False hopes and superficial optimism by either group can lead to despair and further alienation.*

5. *On both sides, living communities of faith and worship are involved. Because of fervent commitments emotions may run deep. It should be underscored that neither polemics nor conversions are the aim of such conversations, nor is false irenicism or mere surface agreement. There may remain honest differences, even as broad areas of agreement are discovered.*

6. *If we have been open and have shared our assumptions, prejudices, traditions and convictions we may be able to share in realistic goal setting, especially in regard to further understanding and common cause in spiritual and social concerns such as fostering human rights.*

7. *Different methods of procedure may be followed as mutually determined locally, such as:*

   a. *Educational visits to advance mutual understanding of artistic, liturgical tradition.*

   b. *Exchange visits at regular worship services, "open houses," and special celebrations, followed by explanation and discussion.*

*c. Informal small group discussions in homes in the manner of the "living-room dialogues." Participants may involve one synagogue and one congregation or neighborhood groups without regard to membership.*

*d. Week-end retreats with equal participation of members from both groups and equality of expertise.*

*e. Popular lectures, discussion, and demonstrations by well-informed resource persons. Lutherans might invite representatives of the American Jewish Committee, Jewish Chautauqua Society, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, National Conference of Christians and Jews, and Jewish theological schools.*

*f. Scholarly lectures and discussions by experts in biblical, historical and theological studies.*

*8. Possible topics include: Our Common Heritage; The People of God and Covenant; Christian and Jewish Views of Man; The Significance of Hebrew Scriptures Today; Law, Righteousness and Justice; State of Israel; The Christian Church in Israel; Survey of the Attitudes and Teachings of the Church concerning Judaism; The Image of the Jew in Christian Literature; Luther and the Jews; The Meaning of Suffering; Can a Hebrew Christian be a Jew? An Israeli? Eschatology in Christian and Jewish Theology; The Significance of the Septuagint; The Universal God in an Age of Pluralism; The State and the Religious Community in Jewish and Lutheran Traditions; What Can We Do Together?*

*9. Christians should make it clear that there is no biblical or theological basis for anti-Semitism. Supposed theological or biblical bases for anti-Semitism are to be examined and repudiated. Conscious or unconscious manifestations of discrimination are to be opposed.*

The statement was printed in the LCA President Robert Marshall's letter to the clergy in September 1971, along with a preface written by Dean Krister Stendahl of Harvard Divinity School. Dean Stendahl wrote that the Lutheran statement was "timely and helpful," and stressed the need for Christians to "listen to our Jewish friends" in Bible study. He suggested that Christians should increase their knowledge of Judaism after 70 A.D.; "For just as Christianity has a long history of developments, reformations and renewal, so has Judaism. But the average educated Christian has been allowed--or even encouraged--to think of Judaism as a timeless mixture of the Old Testament and first century Pharisaism as pictured in the gospels,

while we have an increasingly sophisticated knowledge of the long Christian tradition. Let us have the Jews tell us their full story. They have usually had to learn our story through the American school system's offerings in 'Western' (i.e. Christian) civilization. We need to redress the balance here."

"To implement the Lutheran statement," Dean Stendahl wrote, "will call for hard work and much change in our habits of thought, preaching, teaching and interpretation." He stressed several particular points, among them:

1. *Already within the four gospels we can discern the tendency to increase the negative role of the Jews and their leaders in the execution of Jesus... one of the germs of anti-Semitism within the New Testament.*

2. *The gospels picture Jesus as a sharp critic of his own people. In so doing he does what the prophets of old and the Pharisees and Essenes of his own time had been doing just as sharply within the Jewish community. But somehow something becomes very different when these very same words are read in the gentile Christian community as statements <u>about</u> the Jews and <u>against</u> the Jews.*

3. *...Due to the very setting of Jesus' ministry, Jewish piety is the dark background against which the glories of true Christian piety is pictured. And in Lutheranism this pattern is stylized into the powerful slogan of Law and Gospel. Thereby Jewish attitudes have become the ultimate examples of inferior piety, selfseeking, legalistic, lovelacking, etc. And we have not bothered to ask the obvious questions about how the Jewish tradition within itself came to terms with the dangers of religious pride and self-righteous legalism. For it did; and after all, the Golden Rule was not the invention of Jesus but of his predecessor, a great Pharisee and Scribe by the name of Hillel...*

Dean Stendahl then referred to an editorial in <u>Lutheran Forum</u> of June-July 1971 expressing concern about the recent publication, in English, of writings by Martin Luther which include some wellknown anti-Semitic diatribes. The editorial expressed embarrassment about the publication of this material and commented:

> *If there is no <u>direct</u> line from Luther to Hitler, there is at least a <u>parallel</u> line between Christian and secular anti-Semitism, so that one has helped to support the other. We can only cry out to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob --*

*and to our fellow worshippers of that God, our Jewish brethren -- for forgiveness. Which brings us to another conjecture.*

*What if the publishers of Luther's Works (Fortress and Concordia) turned over the monies realized from the sale of Volumes 15 and 47 to Jewish organizations as a token of reparation for the harm done by anti-Semitism among Lutherans. Such a sign of repentance can, of course, never atone for that blight. One Jew has already atoned for the sins of us all. But because we believe in a once-for-all atonement we believe that the way of repentance and amendment is open to men who will acknowledge their complicity and guilt....*

In similar vein, the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Lutheran Church in America came to grips with the question of the anti-Semitic writings of Martin Luther at its convention in September 1971. According to an article by Paul J. Krisch, Professor of Religious Studies at Wagner College, in the December 1971 (Metropolitan Synod) Digest:

*What we did is (a) to repudiate the antisemitic writings of Dr. Martin Luther, (b) to admit that antisemitism exists 'among Christians' today and (c) to commit ourselves to 'repudiate and actively oppose every form of antisemitism...*

*About our repudiating and combatting antisemitism: It is high time. This is the most positive element in the whole of our synod's action in these resolutions. But this element is turned into a powder puff when we ask the Lutheran Church in America to create 'a program designed to combat antisemitism among members of the Church' -- with all the heavy endowment of the profits from Volume 47. Do you want to make a guess as to what the profits on Volume 47 will be? If they rise to $200 I will be surprised. Can you imagine what kind of giant counter-attack on antisemitism the LCA will be able to mount with $200....*

*The restitution and undoing of the offense against our brother must be commensurate with our offense against him and with the depth of our repentance.*

ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

A notable document on ecumenical and interfaith relations, issued in October 1971 by the Sixth Synod, Archdiocese of Cincinnati, includes a comprehensive section on Roman Catholic-Jewish relations.

In an introduction, the document noted that the declaration (Nostra Aetate) of Vatican Council II inaugurated a new era in Jewish Christian relations. The document called attention to the common heritage of Scripture and certain traditions among major families of faith and declared that "before a real bond of understanding can exist between Roman Catholics and Jews, the task of examining our shared history is mandatory." It declared that Catholics should attempt to understand the impact of the Nazi holocaust on Jews and also the depth of concern that most Jews feel for the State of Israel. It called attention to "the 2000 years of vilification and persecution which have lain the burden of proving good faith on the Christian's shoulders" and called upon Roman Catholics "to abhor any manifestation of anti-Semitism, even as it may appear in our society today.

The document further cautioned Roman Catholics to remember the divergence of views among Jews, and outlined some differences among Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Judaism. It suggested that a committee on Roman Catholic-Jewish relations should always be part of the Archdiocesan Commission on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations.

In sections devoted to dialogue, education, common prayer and community, the document outlined specific goals and recommendations. Under dialogue, it emphasized the need for "respect for the other as he is and esteem for his faith and religious convictions" and excluded the intent of conversion from dialogue. It recommended that all programs should be jointly planned and developed; and that planning a Catholic-Jewish dialogue should involve experts in theology, social organization and inter-personal skills; that Catholics should experience and understand Jewish holidays and that "open houses" between congregations and exchange visits of school-age children may be a means of promoting goodwill and understanding."

In the section devoted to education the document cautions in particular:

1. *All who are responsible for instruction and education should be informed during their training about the permanent significance of the Jewish people in God's plan for mankind. The history of persecution should not be concealed and the Jewish people should not be treated as though they were non-existent.*

2. *The Jewish people is not collectively guilty of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, nor of the rejection of Jesus as Messiah. The Jewish people is not damned, nor bereft of its election. Their suffering, dispersion, and persecution are not punishments for the crucifixion or the rejection of Jesus.*

3. *Much care should be taken in instruction and homilies to right interpretations of biblical readings, especially of those texts which seem to put the Jewish people in an unfavorable light.*

It also recommended such educational programs as institutes for priests, rabbis and lay-readers of both communities for scholarly discussion of common heritage and basic differences; in-service training programs for teachers; the possibility of resource pooling through team teaching in collaboration with Catholic and Jewish academic institutions; and adult education.

The section on common prayer encourages silent meditation and recommends joint preparation for prayer meetings, use of the Hebrew Scriptures for prayers, and caution in avoiding controversial passages.

In the section on community, the document urges Roman Catholics "to cooperate with Jews individually and through organizations in order to work toward the solutions of social problems." It urged Catholics to "understand and respect" the religious significance of the link between the Jewish people and the land of Israel, but cautioned that this did not imply "judgment on historical occurrences or on decisions of a purely political nature." It recommended that Roman Catholics support efforts to "ensure a just and lasting peace in the Holy Land for all concerned."

In an address before a dinner meeting of Christians and Jews on January 20, 1972 in the Jewish Community Center, the late Archbishop Paul F. Leibold of Cincinnati explained the meticulous process by which the Synod documents were drafted, revised and adopted, particularly the document on Christian-Jewish relations. Archbishop Liebold concluded:

*Our objective is understanding.*

*We don't have to agree on everything. Friends don't always agree.*

*In our Synod, we have pledged ourselves to work toward a better understanding.*

*This work, we know involves for us a new openness and involves a sincere effort to eliminate ignorance and prejudice. Most of all, it involves trust.*

*It is to that, that we are pledged. We do not ask you to try to understand us fully, but rather we ask that you will help us to understand you.*

*In that process -- for better or for worse -- you will know us and we will both grow in trust of each other...*

UNITED METHODIST STATEMENT

A document entitled: "A Statement on Interreligious Dialogue: Jews and Christians", prepared by the Executive Committee of the United Methodist Church's General Commission on Ecumenical Affairs, was adopted by the denomination's highest law-making body, the General Conference, in Atlanta, Georgia on April 28,1972.

The Rev. Dr. Robert W. Huston, General Secretary of the Commission, said he believed it was the first time a General Conference had been asked to adopt for policy and action a statement in the area of Jewish-Christian dialogue. The statement had been in preparation for many months, with the process including conversations and consultations with Jewish and Christian theologians and other leaders.

The key action section is a "declaration of intent," which proclaims the desire of the United Methodist Church "honestly and persistently to participate in conversations with Jews."

Extensive background and other material, as well as some suggested guidelines for interreligious conversations and activities, precede the Declaration of Intent. It is made clear in the statement that Christians must acknowledge their responsibility for injustice toward Jews. In a section on "Service for Humanity", the statement declares:

> *Jews in particular have been victims of systematic oppression and injustice more recurrently and barbarously than have Christians. Therefore, in order to continue Jewish and Christian efforts for the common cause of mankind, it is not enough for contemporary Christians to be aware of our common origins.*
>
> *Christians must also become aware of that history in which they have deeply alienated the Jews. They are obligated to examine their own implicit and explicit responsibility for the discrimination against and for organized extermination of Jews, as in the recent past. The persecution by Christians of Jews throughout the centuries calls for clear repentance and resolve to repudiate past injustice and to seek its elimination in the present.*

The statement refers briefly to the Middle East crisis, in a section on "Responsibility in Problem Areas." It said that "dialogues are presently complicated by problems of scriptural interpretation, conditioned attitudes, and turbulent political struggles such as the search for Jewish and Arab security and dignity in the Middle East... In Jewish-Christian dialogues is placed a responsibility for being informed about all sides of the Middle East conflict and being concerned for the implications there for peace and justice for all persons."

The statement suggests several guidelines for interreligious conversations and activities, including visits to churches and synagogues, common prayer and other services of worship; joint study of "that part of our tradition which both groups have in common, the Jewish Bible or the Christian Old Testament"; joint service and social justice projects; various settings for dialogue. The latter should be undertaken in an ecumenical framework wherever possible, and should involve joint planning "to lessen suspicion that conversion is a deliberate intention," the statement adds, but United Methodists are encouraged to take initiative, or to respond to Jewish initiative, in the absence of ecumenical opportunities.

The text of the document follows:

*COMMON ROOTS*

1. *The United Methodist Church understands itself to be a part of the People of God and specifically a part of the whole Christian Church, the Body of Christ. It also gives thanks for its roots in historic Judaism. It rejoices in the reciprocal patrimony of the Old and New Testaments.*

   *The heritage and hopes of an Israel in the context of which Jesus labored have continued to live in the Jewish faith and people. Christian awareness of indebtedness, however, to that history and its relationship to God is not as clear as it ought to be. Not only is the God we worship the same and many of our ethical concerns are held in common, but there are also numerous traditions in Israel's history whose impact upon and potential for the Christian Church were lost or are still undiscovered. Moreover, to be faithful to Jesus the Jew, the contemporary relationship of United Methodist Christians and those who worship as Jews should not be neglected.*

   *Appreciation for common roots should not blind us to the fundamental and inherently mutual theological problems to be faced. The relationship between the covenant of God with Israel and the covenant made in Jesus Christ and the understandings by Jew and Christian of each of these covenants merits exploration anew. Openness to the blessing of God on all covenanted people may lead to useful penetration of the intricacies of the interfaith discussions, if not to ultimate solutions. Serious new conversations need not and should not require either Jews or Christians to sacrifice their basic convictions. There is rich opportunity for potential growth in mutual understanding.*

*SERVICE FOR HUMANITY*

2. *At this moment in history, the potential of our common heritage is particularly important for the advancement of causes decisive for the survival of all mankind. While it is true that the concept of human brotherhood and solidarity is not represented by Jews or Christians alone, this concept has been central for both from their beginnings. The sacredness of persons as God's creation is expressed clearly in both the Old and New Testaments. The Biblical view of each human being as an intrinsic member of the community of persons forbids any suppression of groups through society at large or any manipulation of individuals as well. Nevertheless, Jews in particular have been victims of systematic oppression and injustice more recurrently and more barbarously than have Christians. Therefore, in order to continue Jewish and Christian efforts for the common cause of mankind, it is not enough for contemporary Christians to be aware of our common origins. Christians must also become aware of that history in which they have deeply alienated the Jews. They are obligated to examine their own implicit and explicit responsibility for the discrimination against and for organized extermination of Jews, as in the recent past. The persecution by Christians of Jews throughout centuries calls for clear repentance and resolve to repudiate past injustice and to seek its elimination in the present. In provision of guidelines for action and in specific processes of reconciling action for all men there is an opportunity now to join hands with Jews in common cause for a human community.*

*For Jew and Christian alike, God is active in history. The political and social orders are not free from His judgment. Dialogue which does not blink at differences of assumptions and interpretations of Scripture and faith, but which accentuates the fundamental agreements for the sake of service to society can be, in the Providence of God, a timely and fruitful interreligious adventure.*

*EXPLORING TOGETHER*

*In many areas of spiritual and intellectual concern the past relationship of Jews and Christians has been vitiated by inadequate communication. We have talked past one another instead of with each other. In new conversations there is an important opportunity to move past the polemical use of scripture and to explore how and why past con-*

*ditioning keeps us apart, while we have much in common. In such dialogues, an aim of religious or political conversion, or of proselytizing, cannot be condoned.*

*To commend the love of God in Jesus Christ through saving word and serving work is an ingredient of dialogue for Christians, but anti-semitism (against Jew or Arab) represents a denial of the love we proclaim and compromises our service of justice. Fruitful discussions should proceed with the clear acknowledgement that there is no valid biblical or theological basis for anti-semitism. Prejudice and discrimination on racial grounds are not valid expressions of Christian faith. Why people still violate their unity given in God, and in His creation and redemption, should be examined in company with our Jewish brothers and sisters.*

*RESPONSIBILITY IN PROBLEM AREAS*

4. *Dialogues presently are complicated by problems of scriptural interpretation, conditioned attitudes, and turbulent political struggles such as the search for Jewish and Arab security and dignity in the Middle East. Facing these difficulties together may lead to creative results. In this process, we are obligated to respect the right of the Jews, as of all religious groups, to interpret their own scriptures with regard to their peoplehood and destiny. When rival political positions each claim scriptural warrant, however, the issues no longer are related simply to religious freedom for one or another but to the political issue of how resources may be distributed justly. In Jewish-Christian dialogues is placed a responsibility for being concerned for the implications there for peace and justice for all persons.*

*The Christian obligation to those who survived the Nazi holocaust, the understanding of the relationship of land and peoplehood, and the conviction that God loves all persons, suggest that a new dimension in dialogue with Jews is needed. A new perspective for Christians is a prerequisite for the reduction of mutual ignorance and distrust.*

*GUIDELINES FOR CONVERSATIONS*

5. *The principles which have been outlined above implicitly or explicitly suggest some practical guidelines which can instruct conversations in local communities and at other points of interaction. An incomplete list of the more important considerations is attempted here:*

*a. Wherever possible, conversations with members of Jewish communities should be initiated and maintained through an existing or an ad hoc ecumenical framework. The ecumenical body could begin by accepting the principles in this United Methodist statement as a foundation for the dialogue, or by drafting its own.*

*b. In the absence of cooperative Christian efforts to explore mutual understanding, tensions and difficulties, United Methodist initiative (or response to Jewish initiative) is to be encouraged.*

*c. Christian participants should make clear they do not justify past injustice done by Christians to Jews and that there is no tenable biblical or theological base for anti-semitism, and that they themselves wish to be free of it.*

*d. Joint planning of conversations should emphasize the broad purposes of dialogues and lessen suspicion that conversion is a deliberate intention.*

*e. Honest differences should be expected and probed seriously, even as areas of agreement and mutual support are discovered.*

*f. A series of meetings with some guarantee of continuity of participants is necessary for fruitful conversation. False hopes and superficial optimism resulting from a single session together can lead to despair and further alienation.*

*g. The joint study of that part of our tradition which both groups have in common, the Jewish Bible or the Christian Old Testament, can be of paramount importance. It is here that the foundations of Jewish and Christian existence coincide. A joint study has potential for new insight into our mutual relationship and our togetherness.*

*h. Conversations which begin with exploration of scriptural and traditional heritages may move to political and sociological and economic investigations and might well result in common action in the causes of human rights.*

*i. The dialogues should not overlook the rich opportunities afforded in visitation of synagogues and churches and in common prayer and other interreligious services.*

*DECLARATION OF INTENT*

*6. No one can foresee with absolute clarity the shape of the future. Openness to dialogue with other major religions of the world is not excluded for the future, but a bond of understanding and peace between Jew and Christian surely is one key ingredient of a viable community of persons. In both theological and practical issues of the moment there are offered challenges and opportunities for growth.*

*A reduction of Jewish or Christian beliefs to a tepid lowest common denominator or hardly distinguishable culture religions is not sought in this process. A new confrontation of our common roots, of our common potential for service to humanity, with the benefits from mutual explorations, and with the knotty contemporary problems of world peace commends itself to us. Thus, it is the desire of The United Methodist Church honestly and persistently to participate in conversations with Jews. Our intent includes commitment to their intrinsic worth and import for society. It includes as well the Christian hope that the "oneness given in Jesus Christ" may become an example of hope for the oneness of humanity. Within this framework and in acknowledgement of the common Fatherhood of God, on all occasions for this new interreligious adventure The United Methodist Church seeks to be responsive.*

## SOUTHERN BAPTIST RESOLUTIONS

A resolution on anti-Semitism, adopted without a negative vote at the North Carolina State Baptist Convention in Charlotte, N.C. on November 24, 1971 was followed by a similarly worded resolution passed by the Southern Baptist Convention in Philadelphia on June 7, 1972. The North Carolina resolution "urged the literature producing agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention to keep all anti-Semitic statements, inferences, implications and innuendos from our literature...."

The text of the Southern Baptist Convention resolution follows:

*ON ANTI-SEMITISM*

*WHEREAS, Anti-Semitism has been a serious problem for the Church through most of Christian history, and*

*WHEREAS, This unchristian attitude on the part of many peoples has led to brutal persecution of the Jews in numerous countries and societies, and*

*WHEREAS, the most flagrant and cruel expression of this spiritual malignancy, the Nazi holocaust, transpired in our generation, and*

*WHEREAS, Latent Anti-Semitism lies barely under the surface in many western, Christian cultures today, and*

*WHEREAS, Many Christian communions and denominations, including our own, have failed to take a sufficiently vigorous stand against anti-Semitism, and*

*WHEREAS, It is clearly a moral and ethical question of the greatest magnitude, and*

*WHEREAS, Baptists share with Jews a heritage of persecution and suffering for conscience sake,*

*Therefore, be it Resolved that this Convention go on record as opposed to any and all forms of anti-Semitism; that it declare anti-Semitism unchristian; that we messengers to this convention pledge ourselves to combat anti-Semitism in every honorable, Christian way.*

*Be it further Resolved, that Southern Baptists covenant to work positively to replace all anti-Semitic bias with the Christian attitude and practice of love for Jews, who along with all other men, are equally beloved of God.*

Both resolutions were introduced by the Rev. B. Elmo Scoggins of the First Baptist Church, Raleigh, N.C.

* * * * *

# STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS ON SOVIET JEWRY

## NORWEGIAN BISHOPS' STATEMENT

Suppression of the Jewish minority and persecution of Christians in the Soviet Union were condemned in a statement issued by the Bishops' Council of the Church of Norway in Oslo, December 7, 1971.

The document, titled "Concerning Oppression," noted that in recent years there has been a strong tendency among Christian Churches in the western world to engage in sharp self-criticism in regard to human rights, and that wrongs in the west were being condemned more consistently than human rights violations in Communist countries or the Third World. Noting suppression of Soviet Jews and internment of "troublesome critics" in psychiatric institutions, persecution of Christians in a number of countries behind the Iron Curtain and restrictions on evangelism, the text of the Bishops' statement follows:

*CONCERNING OPPRESSION*

*In the recent years within our entire culture there has developed a new understanding of one's own guilt over against a humanity where poverty, lack of freedom, and oppression continue to be a dramatic reality. In so many ways that which we call "our Western World" has contributed to a continuation of inequality and lack of liberty in the entire world. The newly awakened self-criticism of the Western World has been directed sharply not only against the U.S.A. but against an entire culture which has not been able to translate its ideals into deeds.*

*For the Christian Churches both individually and through their ecumenical organizations, it has been natural to engage in this self-criticism to add dimensions of depth and seriousness. The World Council of Churches Conference on Church and Society (1966) and the large Uppsala meeting (1968), both within the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation General Assembly in Evian (1970) contributed strength and sharpness to this western self-criticism.*

*The Church of Norway also has directly engaged itself in the same examination of conscience. As far as the Bishops Council is concerned we refer to the statements "On the Race Policy of South Africa" (1963), "In the Year of Human Rights" (1968), and our support to the World Council of*

*Churches' program for humanitarian aid through organizations which combat racism (1970). The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches recorded during its meeting in Addis Ababa in January 1971 a statement where suppression and violation of Human Rights in today's world were clearly condemned.*

The Bishops' statement then quotes the following section from the Minutes of the WCC Addis Ababa meeting which condenses a portion of the plenary discussion of the Human Rights statement before it was adopted:

*We had been vocal on the racial issue but less articulate in speaking on other issues where human rights were threatened. We longed and prayed for the day when all member churches would have the privilege of speaking against unrighteousness, not only in other parts of the world but in their own societies. The World Council had to be sensitive to the situation of churches which did not yet have this privilege and this was the reason for the apparent silence on the violations of human rights in various parts of the world which caused some members to question the political objectivity of the WCC "Basic human rights are denied to millions of men and women, to students, intellectuals, journalists, authors, denying their right to express their own political convictions if these do not coincide with those of the government or the political party, denying the right for citizens to leave their country in order to settle down in another, denying the rights to Christian ministers and lay people who do not accept the limited area of activities permitted by the government." [World Council of Churches, Central Committee Minutes and Reports, p.66.]*

The Bishops' statement continued:

*We join wholeheartedly in underscoring this. In the statement we issued last year on "International Cooperation of Churches", we pointed to a disturbing tendency in the ecumenical resolutions and statements of recent years. Wrongs in the Western World are being condemned with considerably more consistency and strength than violation of human rights in communist countries or in 'the Third World.' This may have its good tactical reasons, but nevertheless causes a lack of balance which may weaken the credibility of the Christian churches' criticism of society, positive and negative.*

*With this background, we are pleased with the strong and explicit statement from the meeting of WCC. And we find it fitting in subscribing to what has been said there, to point*

*to three serious situations which there is every reason for the Christian Church to protest. All three of these cases deal with violation of obvious human rights in communistic countries:*

1. *We begin by naming the suppression of the Jewish minority in the Soviet Union against which the attention of the world has been repeatedly directed.*

2. *Further we point to the suppression of freedom of spirit in the same country, which in a grotesque way is expressed in the fact that troublesome critics of the system are being treated as insane and interned in psychiatric facilities. On both these two points there is now being created an international opinion, and we appeal to the churches of the world to participate actively in this forming of world opinion.*

3. *In addition to this we must mention the persecution of Christians which continues to be an overt fact in a number of countries behind "the Iron Curtain." Officially there prevails in these countries full freedom of religion. One should, however, realize that Christian evangelization is being restricted to such an extent that believers are deprived of the basic opportunities to witness to their faith. Christians who violate such restrictions are being punished as enemies of the state and as offenders of civil law. In reality they are, however, punished for their faith. They are punished because they take their faith seriously and in accordance with the Master's words try to convert people.*

*We would feel like traitors against the cause of the Gospel itself if we forget this, if we fail to speak up against this, and if we neglect to do that which is within our power to build a worldwide opinion against this. In this matter we turn to our own people and our own Government. Norway has in international relationships made it a point of honor to speak up for those who cannot defend themselves and for the oppressed. The question of the persecution of Christians in our time ought to be raised in all the international meetings where it is possible to speak to those states which are responsible for persecutions. We also turn to the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation with an appeal for an untiring endeavor to change these conditions.*

Taking note of the statement by the Norwegian bishops, the General Board of the National Council of Churches unanimously adopted the following statement at its meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, on February 14, 1972:

> *As members of the General Board of the National Council of Churches we express our deep concern about the continuing violation of religious freedom and other human rights in many parts of the world.*
>
> *As Christians we cannot remain silent while aware of the harassment and persecution of Soviet Jews and Christians as well as intellectuals, political and ethnic dissenters and harsh sentences imposed on them in trials closed to the general public.*
>
> *We appeal to Soviet authorities to stop the practice of trying to control dissent by committing dissenters to mental institutions.*
>
> *We join the Lutheran Church of Norway in protest against such brutal violations of human rights and invite all national and international confessional and ecumenical organizations to actively participate in such a worldwide movement of solidarity with all victims of oppression.*

Copies of the resolution were sent to the Secretary General of the United Nations, to the President of the United States, and the Secretary of State, as well as to heads of member communions of the National Council of Churches.

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

The General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting at Louisville, Kentucky, October 15-20, 1971, called upon the Soviet Union to observe fully the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights and extend to Jews and Christians the full measure of equality to which they are entitled under the Constitution of the Soviet Union. Excerpts from the resolution, "Concerning Jews and Christians in Communist Dominated Countries" follow:

> *WHEREAS the Official Board of the Taylor Lake Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Seabrook, Texas, has reminded Christians in the United States that "there are many documented reports of financial and educational discrimination, separation of families, and arrests of Christians and Jews in Communist countries"; and*
>
> *WHEREAS in 1971 there has been particularly blatant discrimination in the Soviet Union practiced against the three and*

*one-half million Jews, who unlike the Christians, are not permitted to publish devotional literature or other articles, or to have contact with those of their faith in other countries, or to operate seminaries; and,*

*WHEREAS we have learned that many Jews in the Soviet Union desire to emigrate to Israel but are not permitted to do so; and,*

*WHEREAS...the trials of Jews during 1971 at Leningrad and Riga...provided new and frightening evidence that anti-Semitism once again in this century imperils the life of the Jewish community; and,*

*WHEREAS religious discrimination also exists against Christians in the Soviet Union and other communist countries, and though less threatening that that against the Jews, still requires a heroic faith known only to those who suffer for conscience's sake; and,*

*WHEREAS, though religious discrimination is not limited to the Soviet Union or communist countries, but exists in many other countries whose ideology is different, it is still imperative for Christians to speak out now against this particular attack against the Jewish community in the Soviet Union*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting at Louisville, Kentucky, October 15-20, 1971, while calling attention to religious discrimination against Jews and Christians in other communist and non-communist countries, specifically calls upon the Soviet Union to observe fully the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and extend to Jews and Christians the full measure of equality to which they are entitled under the constitution of the Soviet Union; and,*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the Soviet Union to cease financial, vocational and educational discrimination, separation of families, and arrests of Jews and Christians; and...to permit Jews to live in accord with their cultural and religious heritage freely and openly, including the right now granted other religious communities to publish devotional literature and articles, have contact with those of their faith in other countries and to operate seminaries; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Soviet authorities be urged to grant permission to those Jews who desire to do so to emigrate to Israel or to any other country, and to ensure the unhindered exercise of this right; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon our members and the Christian community throughout the world to remember in daily prayer Jews and Christians who suffer for their faith in the Soviet Union and in other communist and non-communist countries, and encourage the members of their respective congregations to do likewise; and,*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be sent to the Soviet Ambassador to the United States and to the Soviet Ambassador to the United Nations; and,*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the President of the United States of America, the Secretary of State and the United States representative to the United Nations for their information and whatever action they deem appropriate.*

WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL

A resolution on human rights in the Soviet Union was adopted unanimously by the World Methodist Council Executive Committee at the 12th World Methodist Conference on August 25, 1971 in Denver, Colorado. The Executive Committee expressed

*...its abhorrence of every kind of racial and religious discrimination. It views with deep alarm the resurgence of anti-Semitism in a number of nations of the world. In particular at this moment the Council is concerned with the resurgence of anti-Semitism within the Soviet Union and protests against the suppression of Jewish cultural and religious traditions and restrictions on the proper rights of Jews to emigrate to other lands.*

NATIONAL INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATION ON SOVIET JEWRY

More than 600 people, representing all the major faith communities in Chicago, and including leaders of religious thought throughout the U.S. appealed to President Nixon to intercede with Soviet leaders on behalf of oppressed Soviet Jews.

Meeting in Holy Name Cathedral in Chacago for the largest national interreligious assembly ever held in the cause of Soviet Jewry, they enthusiastically endorsed a Statement of Conscience which had been adopted on March 20th at the closing session of a two-day National Interreligious Consultation on Soviet Jewry.

Among the leaders of the assembly were: Most Rev. Fulton J. Sheen, Titular Archbishop of Newport; Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, National Interreligious Affairs Director, American Jewish Committee; Emanuel

Vergis, Dean of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Chicago, representing His Eminence Iakovos, Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America; Dr. Cynthia C. Wedel, President, National Council of Churches; and Rev. Dr. M. L. Wilson, Chairman, National Committee of Black Churchmen. Presiding at the meeting was Rabbi Ernst Lorge, President of the Chicago Conference on Religion and Race, which co-sponsored the Assembly together with the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry.

The Statement of Conscience follows:

*"Thou shalt not stand idly by while the blood of thy brother cries out to thee from the earth."*

*"Let justice roll down as the waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."*

*The National Interreligious Consultation on Soviet Jewry, meeting in unprecedented deliberation on March 19 and 20 in Chicago, Illinois, calls upon the conscience of mankind to make known its profound concern about the continued denial of the right to emigrate, and other human rights of the three million Jewish people of the Soviet Union and of other deprived groups and nationalities.*

*For believing Christians and Jews, the denial of the spiritual nature of man and his right to nurture and to perpetuate the spiritual life is to deny the creative power of God in whose image He made man. The discrimination against the Jews by the Soviet Union gives us all reason to believe that, under the pretext of being anti-Zionist, it is the very contribution of the Jews to humanity which is under attack. It is precisely the Jewish testimony in the world that man's identity and freedom are not granted primarily by any state or constitution but are found in the nature of man himself. That is why each human being is threatened in his fundamental right to freedom of conscience when the Jews are persecuted.*

*Realizing our own failures in racism and in other areas of human rights, we nevertheless cannot remain silent as long as the Soviet Union continues to hamper or strangle the spiritual and cultural life of the Jewish people through extreme and special acts of discrimination. We appeal to the Soviet authorities to grant religious rights to Russian Jewry -- the establishment of religious, educational and cultural institutions for the perpetuation of Judaism and Jewish culture; the lifting of the prohibitions against publishing Hebrew Bibles and prayer books and the production of religious articles; the permission to train Rabbis and Jewish teachers both in Russia and in seminaries abroad; the creation of a representative body of Soviet Jewry with freedom to communicate and associate with their co-religionists abroad.*

*We appeal to the Soviet authorities -- let them live as Jews or let them leave to be Jews. This consultation is gratified to know that the Soviet government has heard the pleas of millions in many lands and has permitted several thousands of Jews to leave the country for Israel and elsewhere. We urge the Soviet authorities to relent, and to continue to allow the thousands of others who have sought exit visas to emigrate to the countries of their choice -- which is their right under the United Nations Declaration.*

*This consultation is deeply disturbed by the reports of growing acts of harassment, intimidation, arbitrary arrests, and confinement of Jews and dissenters to mental institutions. We appeal to the Soviet government to end this policy of wanton oppression and fear.*

*This consultation protests against the continued imprisonment under ruthless conditions of prisoners of conscience -- Jewish and non-Jewish -- and we urge that they be released and be shown clemency.*

*This consultation protests against the government sponsored campaign of anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist propaganda which constitutes an incitement to hatred and violence in contravention of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights.*

*This consultation resolves to commit itself to a program of continuous watchfulness and unrelenting efforts in demanding and in championing freedom for all of Soviet Jewry, of Christians, and of intellectuals -- of all who suffer for their courage and their struggle for human dignity.*

*This National Interreligious Consultation on Soviet Jewry consisting of Protestants, Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and Jews, authorizes a direct appeal to President Nixon, as the representative of the American people, to convey in clear and forthright terms to the Soviet authorities during their forthcoming conversations in Moscow the expectation of the American people -- Christians and Jews, black and white, liberal and conservative -- that these discriminations and denials of Soviet Jewry and others be stopped now, and that fundamental human rights be granted -- now. We seek the relaxation of international tensions and conflicts between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the surest test of the genuineness of the commitment of Soviet authorities to the cause of universal peace and justice is the granting of justice and freedom to the Jews and other deprived religious groups and nationalities.*

## SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

One of the outgrowths of the National Interreligious Consultation on Soviet Jewry was a Paschaltide letter from the General Superior of Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother Margaret, to the members of her Order. "As we approach Easter," she wrote, "our thoughts and minds do quite naturally move toward the redeeming, saving action of Jesus by which we have become free children of our Father in heaven." Reminding them that it was also the season when Jews celebrated their deliverance from slavery, she wrote: "It is our task today to make efforts to hear the cries of the oppressed and to do what we can to lift their burdens."

Mother Margaret raised in particular the plight of Soviet Jews and suggested some practical things that Sisters might do to aid their cause.

## BAPTIST STATEMENTS

The presidents of three Baptist conventions representing a majority of all Baptists in the United States issued a "joint appeal to the Christian conscience" calling on President Nixon to intercede with the Soviet government on behalf of Russian Jews during his visit to the Soviet Union.

The statement, marking the first time the presidents of the three denominations have issued a joint declaration on any issue, was signed by Mrs. Ruth Rohlfs, president of the American Baptist Convention; Dr. Carl E. Bates, president of the Southern Baptist Convention; and Dr. L. Venchael Booth, president of the Progressive National Baptist Convention.

In issuing the appeal to President Nixon, the three Baptist presidents said: "To keep silent about wrongs in our beloved land or in distant places is a violation of our understanding of Christian principles of justice and compassion. It is in the name and spirit of the Lord of all, who lived His earthly life as a Jew, that we ask your active support of Solidarity Day." (Solidarity Day, April 30th, was set aside to bring together Jews and non-Jews in an expression of support for oppressed people anywhere in the world.) In urging Baptist support for Solidarity Day, the presidents also suggested that the Statement of Conscience adopted by the National Interreligious Consultation on Soviet Jewry be read to congregations.

Concern for Soviet Jewry had previously been expressed by Mrs. Rohlfs in letters sent by her as President of the American Baptist Convention on August 23, 1971 to the Most Rev. Nikodim, Metropolitan of Leningrad and Novgorod; to Ambassador Dobrynin and to the Permanent Mission of the U.S.S.R. to the United Nations.

EPISCOPAL STATEMENT

In a letter addressed to the clergy of his diocese, Bishop Jonathan G. Sherman of the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island noted that the emigration of Soviet Jews "remains subject to arbitrary decisions." Bishop Sherman detailed a number of basic human rights denied Soviet Jews as a community:

> *The right to educate their children as Jews, to freely congregate at a house of worship or to train religious leaders; the right to publish their own historical and literary works, to support a real Jewish theater; the basic right to emigrate to Israel where they can live as Jews have all been denied to Soviet Jews. If this policy continues indefinitely, the more than 3,000,000 Jews in the Soviet Union would be doomed to cultural and spiritual extinction. To prevent such a disaster, at a time when memory of the destruction of 6,000,000 European Jews is still vivid, millions of Americans across the country will band together on Sunday, April 30th to focus attention on this problem and to help effect a change.*

ADDITIONAL CHRISTIAN STATEMENTS RELATED TO SOLIDARITY DAY

Numerous Christian church groups and leaders responded to the Solidarity Day for Soviet Jews. The presidents of the three largest Lutheran denominations in North America asked the members of their churches to "realize the threat to religious liberty which exists in the world today, and to add their voices to those already urging that all men be guaranteed the right to worship and witness to their faith according to their own convictions."

The statement was signed by Dr. Kent Knutson of the American Lutheran Church; Dr. Robert J. Marshall of the Lutheran Church in America; and Dr. J.A.O. Preus of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

The National Association of Evangelicals, in a unanimously adopted resolution, supported "the basic principle of religious freedom for all men everywhere." Noting President Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union, the NAE statement concluded: "As we pray for the success of his visit, we also hope that he may have opportunity to convey the moral and humanitarianconcern of Americans for the plight of Jews in the Soviet Union, and all other deprived religious groups and nationalities."

The Most Rev. Joseph L. Bernardin, General Secretary of the United States Catholic Conference, in a statement of support for Solidarity Day, pointed out that "Soviet restriction of religious and civil liberties extends not only to Jews but to Christians as well." He noted a recent petition of 17,000 Lithuanian Catholics protesting suppression of their religious rights, and declared: "When government is bent on denying fundamental religious liberties to any group, none is safe and all must join in protest.

Attention to the plight of Soviet Jewry, either by endorsement of Solidarity Day, distribution of the Interreligious Statement of Conscience, or a call for prayers on their behalf, was forthcoming from a variety of other Christian groups including the Archdiocese of Chicago; the Dioceses of Atlanta, Georgia; Rapid City, South Dakota; Louisville, Kentucky and Pittsburgh; the United Presbyterian Church and the Presbytery of New York City, the Texas Conference of Churches, the Council of Churches of Greater Washington, the Connecticut Council of Churches, the Arizona Ecumenical Council, and the National Conference of Christians and Jews in Connecticut and western Massachussetts.

* * * * *

## DOCUMENTATION ON THE MIDDLE EAST, ISRAEL AND JERUSALEM

POPE PAUL VI reiterated his concern for the Middle East, among other areas of the world, in a speech to the Sacred College and Roman prelates in reply to Christmas wishes. As reported by *Osservatore Romano*, December 24, 1971, the Pope stated:

*THE PRESENCE OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD*
*FOR A TRUE, FULL AND STABLE PEACE*

*...In this context we have not forgotten the Middle East, particularly the land that we Christians dearly call Holy, and of which one is reminded in so many ways these days -- the Land of Jesus.*

*If there is reason for satisfaction in noting that during the past year and a half the sound of arms has quieted in almost all the area, there is reason for not unjustified trepidation and fear that the uncertain armistice may suddenly cease, without having the results for which, in the main, it was originally proposed and accepted: the voluntary search for a peace treaty or, at least, a solid beginning of agreement, through fair negotiations that would take into account the rights and legitimate interests of all sides; among them, in their proper place, the populations who were forced to leave their land because of events in recent decades.*

*As for ourselves, we have never failed during encounters with responsible persons of the interested nations insistently to encourage every noble effort in favor of the prolongation of the truce and toward a just and honorable understanding. We are convinced of the urgent necessity for a peaceful solution, wisely balanced, of this Middle Eastern knot; a solution that, certainly, cannot be imposed by having recourse to further wars or through military victories.*

*For that which concerns Jerusalem in particular, we do not now intend to add other considerations to those already repeatedly expressed in the past; confirming the need for a special status, internationally guaranteed, which would do justice to the pluralistic and altogether special character of the Holy City, and to the rights of the various communities that reside in it or look upon it and flow to it as a spiritual center.*

BRITISH CATHOLIC PRESS COMMENTS

Two leading British Catholic publications, the weekly *THE TABLET* and *THE MONTH* commented editorially on Jerusalem in May.

*THE TABLET* (May 20, 1972) remarked that Israeli authorities seem "well aware" of the needs of the people in the area to go on living, working, and caring for their families in the absence of lasting peace terms. Israeli policy has "taken at least some of the suffering out of the refugee problem, enabling families to be reunited despite the formal state of war. Trade between the west and east banks of the Jordan flourishes, and those Jordanian citizens who are now under Israeli administration live everyday lives not very different, and in some respects materially better, than during the nineteen years when Palestine was divided by barbed wire."

*THE TABLET* pointed to the two-fold interest of Western Christianity in the Holy Land --the indigenous Christian population and the Holy Places. The Christian population of East Jerusalem, which fell by half between 1948 and 1967, is just beginning to increase again, it noted. "The Christian Arabs who are Israeli citizens are fully represented in Parliament; their social and political equality, and their freedom of religion are guaranteed under the proclamation of independence, as is the safeguarding of the holy places of all religions...."

The Israeli administration

> *...seems efficient, enlightened and conciliatory. But it rests on a shaky foundation in international law: the Security Council has twice said that its acts have no legal validity. Nonetheless, pending a peace treaty, someone has to do the work and take the decisions. In all these places, life must go on. And in that very special place Jerusalem, a transtemporal and transnational holy city for three of the great religions of the world, there is a real risk that life would stop altogether if it ceased to be a living and growing centre of trade, commerce and administration.*
>
> *No one on either side wants to see it divided again, nor is it realistic to suppose that it could flourish under some international administration, owing allegiance to no one. Stateless cities cannot thrive any more than stateless persons. What might perhaps one day be possible, in the context of a permanent settlement, is a measure of international accountability by the administering state, an obligation which Israel would assume.*

*THE MONTH* (May) pointed to a number of difficulties: internal rivalries between various Christian bodies asserting their conflicting claims, tensions between Latins and Orthodox, and the question of political sovereignty.

The publication then reviewed the history of the *corpus separatum* proposal, various interpretations of the Vatican position on "legal" or "functional" internationalization, and suggested that it is in some version of this functional internationalization that a solution may be found, citing both Walter Lander and Bishop Bernard Collin in support. Functional internationalization, the review commented,

> *...is more than perhaps it appears: a vague and nebulous formula making no substantial difference to the situation. In fact it would be far otherwise because it would be, by hypothesis, an acceptance by Israel of an international obligation which did not cut across her own territorial and political autonomy. One may reasonably wonder whether it would not be wise on the part of the Holy See to make this modification in its demands...*

## NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES' STUDY DOCUMENT

A statement on Jerusalem, received February 12th by the General Board of the National Council of Churches, meeting in Charlotte, N.C., agreed that Jerusalem should be unified but sees "no advantage in pursuing plans for unification through establishment of a separate political entity under international control."

The statement, referred to member churches and units of the National Council for further discussion, and intended for use in dialogue with Arabs and Jews, envisions Jerusalem as becoming "a living symbol of a pluralistic society in which diverse men find human dignity, a sense of freedom, and peace."

Prepared by a panel of fifteen eminent scholars, diplomats and specialists after months of study, the statement was presented to the Board by Dean Krister Stendahl of Harvard University Divinity School and A. Denis Baly, Professor of Religion, Kenyon College. Moderator of the panel was Dr. R. H. Edwin Espy, General Secretary of the National Council. The NCC's statement on Jerusalem follows:

> *As Christians, our concern with Jerusalem has to do with the human and civil rights, and the religious beliefs and practices of all those who consider the city to be their home. We honor and urge full respect for the feelings of*

*attachment to Jerusalem found among Jews, Muslims and Christians. We affirm, at the outset, our conviction that the right and proper interests of Jews, Christians and Muslims can and must be harmonized in this City of Peace.*

*Because of the great events which have taken place in Jerusalem for the good of all mankind, we hope and trust that this city will become pre-eminently a living symbol of a pluralistic society in which diverse men find human dignity, a sense of freedom and peace. We are aware of the injustice, hatred and suffering brought by the recent wars, and the increasingly militant nationalisms and prolongation of tension and fears. But this does not mean that mutually acceptable ways cannot be found. In affirming the will and the right of Palestinians and Israelis to develop their own identities in dignity, we seek and support solutions for their social, political, economic and cultural lives which are based on shared values. We believe it is possible to develop, over time, a pluralism acceptable to all concerned. We believe that all can come to know a sense of security that upholds rather than decreases the rights of all minorities.*

*The status of the "Holy Places" constitutes a distinct and important part of the present debate. Christians have a concern for the Holy Places but they differ in the importance they attach to them. Many of the member churches of the NCC hold that the Holy Places do not necessarily establish a spiritual link with Christ, but some of our members and, of course, many of our sister churches outside the NCC hold that they do. The patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles and our Lord Jesus Christ lived in this land. The climactic events of Jesus' life took place in Jerusalem. Centuries of devotion have been focussed upon the sites traditionally associated with these persons and events,and a vast number of Christians would be deeply distressed at any threat to those places by which they are helped to identify themselves with the earthly life of their Master.*

*Christians should never forget that Jerusalem has great significance for Muslims and Jews. It is sacred to both. Great devotion has been shown by both to the Holy City though for different reasons and in different ways.*

*We are among those concerned for the preservation of the beauty and natural setting of Jerusalem as well as for the historic and artistic achievements of mankind which are a*

*part of its heritage. We hope that the city will continue to be one of the great and open spiritual and cultural centers of the world.*

*The special quality of Jerusalem should not prevent its orderly physical development to meet the needs of all of its people nor cause it to be turned into a mere "museum piece." This development, however, should be consistent with the historic character of the city. Many inside and outside Israel are striving to promote this but some official actions have been taken indicative of forced development and there are at present, apparently, pressures -- some of them political -- towards continuance of this. It would be productive of bitterness, anger and injustice if the pressures which led to these actions were to prevail. We recognize that modernization is necessary but we urge that any transformation, including industrialization, will not be permitted to damage the special character of a region of such historic significance to three religions.*

*Israel is now in control of the whole of Jerusalem and has taken administrative and legislative actions to unify the city. Since June 1967, the United Nations has criticized these actions concerning the acquired territory and declared them invalid. Some large segments of world public opinion have been equally critical. Nevertheless, Israel has asserted its intention to maintain control over Jerusalem. While we believe that Jerusalem should be unified, in the present circumstances we see no advantage in pursuing plans for unification through the establishment of a separate political entity under international control. This does not mean that we support unilateral actions of the occupying power. The Palestinians have not so far played a significant role in the planning and decision making concerning the future of the city. Unless they actively and freely participate in all necessary decisions and actions, mutually acceptable agreements cannot be found that respond to the needs and rights of all the people in the city, and antagonisms will be perpetuated that threaten the peace of the region and of the world.*

*The Old City within the walls and the Eastern part of the city without the walls, undoubtedly pose a special problem because most of the Holy Places are concentrated there. The present status of those places dates from a "firman" or imperial decree issued by the Ottoman rulers in 1757 which divided the Christian sites between the Christian communities in order to resolve conflicts between them. This led to the establishment of the so-called regime of the status quo governing the Holy Places, Muslim and Jewish as well as Christian, which was confirmed by another "firman" in 1852. Today Jews feel that continuation of*

*all aspects of the status quo could leave them in a position of disadvantage. Muslims and particularly Christians feel that any alterations in the status quo could lead to further developments which would be to their disadvantage. Whatever correction of the traditional situation may be considered, however, any unilateral arrangements, however judiciously made, would not be accepted as just by all concerned. Without presuming to adjudge the status quo itself the question of the Holy Places could be dealt with separately or in the context of an overall peace settlement.*

*In making this statement we, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, recognize that we do not have the right to dictate what shall be done in the city of Jerusalem and its immediate surroundings. Yet we would be negligent indeed if we merely remained silent and did not venture to offer counsel about so important a matter. The preceding paragraphs therefore represent something of our hopes for the city.*

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN TASK FORCE ON THE MIDDLE EAST

The 1971 General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church recommended that the denomination's Council on Church and Society prepare background material and recommendations on the Middle East for consideration by the General Assembly of 1972. The Council approved the design for a Task Force to undertake a study which was to include "a quality background paper which reviews the history of the conflict, clearly delineates the positions of the parties, highlights realistic possibilities for a durable settlement, and provides a Christian theological frame of reference."

The Task Force accomplished its work by four methods:

1. Individual reading and study of a large number of books, journals and articles.

2. Participation of a number of Temporary Consultants invited to present positions at meetings. These included spokesmen for three distinct Israeli points of view, two distinct Palestinian points of view, an Egyptian scholar, two spokesmen for the American Jewish community, and experts on United States and Soviet policy in the Middle East.

3. A 17-day visit to the Middle East by the Chairman and one of the staff aides, resulting in a written report and taped interviews. Extensive interviews were conducted

with over 90 individuals in church, government, university, press, and movement circles in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel and Egypt.

4. Intensive group discussion, definition of issues, and delineation of viewpoints during four two-day meetings of the Task Force.

The Task Force report -- a substantial document running to 70 pages--was accepted as a study document by the denomination's General Assembly on May 22. It provides a general framework, a purview of the peoples of the Middle East -- including the various Christian communions, the Arab peoples in their historic context, the Jewish people -- and discusses the attachment and relation to the land by various groups from biblical times to the present. Detailed information is provided regarding the development and achievement of independence of the various Arab nations and of the state of Israel, and of the "clashing memories" of the people of the Middle East. The past and present interactions of Jews and Christians, and Muslims and Christians, is explained in depth and self-critically, with the report underscoring Christian responsibility both for historic anti-Semitism and for alienation of Muslims going back to The Crusades and later missionary efforts.

The study document reflects a compassionate understanding of the various conflicting parties in the Middle East and calls for dialogue and efforts for reconciliation:

> *The Task Force specifically rejected any attempt to judge between the parties involved in the Middle East as to which has been dealt with most unjustly. Palestinian, Jewish and Arab peoples all have histories and attachments to the land that run back into the mists of pre-history. The cup of suffering caused by displacements, pogroms, crusades, and holocausts is full. Solution must be found at some level beyond the attempt to weigh the suffering of one people against that of another.*
>
> *We repudiate a mere balancing act, as though a foreign agency, whether American or European, ecclesiastical or secular, could decide how much of justice should be dealt to one or the other side. The reality is that the Middle East is a scene of clashing rights and of incompatible justices, and if one is not willing or able to make decisions now which create the possibility of a better justice, there can be no future except a continuation of the human wrongs and frustrated aspirations of the Middle Eastern people.*

*In the same way the Task Force has neither the wish nor the intention to impose upon the parties in the Middle East a third party version of their histories... This report tries to clarify for Americans the complexity and richness of the elements of Middle East background essential to understanding and response, rather than present a definitive history.*

*...we must first of all advocate the need for dialogue. It requires that the parties avoid closing doors to one another; or if they are closed, open them. It requires that favorite formulations should be held in abeyance and subjected to re-examination. It demands a higher respect for the faith, traditions, sufferings, accomplishments, and even the myths of the contending parties than either is now willing to grant the other. It requires that values that are human and universal be identified, and brought into the foreground. It requires that minority views be taken seriously by majorities. It requires that all parties ask the questions that can make the future and not only those which would remake the past... The way to peace, there as here, lies not through partisanship and polarization but through reconcilation. Shalom. Salaam.*

On the question of Jerusalem, the study document suggests that the final governance for Jerusalem must be primarily the decision of Israelis and Palestinians. It adds:

*Since the role and significance of Jerusalem is so infinitely complex, we feel that an attempt to deal with Middle East issues should not focus initially on controversies relating to Jerusalem. In the process of moving toward peace, the knottiness of the Jerusalem problem dictates that it be considered toward the end of any negotiating process and only when Palestinians have become politically able to discuss the city with Israel. The possibility of even analyzing the components of the problem dispassionately depends on the satisfactory resolution of numerous points of difference and conflict, and the development of much more trust and rapport among the involved parties than now exists...*

The study document examines some fundamental forces toward peace in the Middle East including a realization on the part of Arab leaders (not always verbally expressed) that Israel cannot be defeated in war in any foreseeable time, and demands of urgent domestic needs in Israel and the Arab world alike.

The document suggests some initiatives for peace, but indicates that the initiatives must come from all sides. The Arab states should aim "to cool anti-Israel emotionalism cultivated by an earlier leadership" and must find ways to converse effectively with Israel without further

debate concerning preconditions and terms. The government of Israel needs to move now "to institute full civil liberties" for Palestine Arabs and "thus legitimize the development of Palestinian political expression and activity within the administered areas in Israel. Jordan, Egypt and Syria, for their part, need to refrain from interference in the development of Palestinian institutions essential to self-determination in the administered territories."

The super powers must "seek through bilateral negotiations to reconcile their own vital interests in the Middle East rather than pursue them by unilateral and menacing interventions in Middle Eastern affairs."

The Task Force concluded its report with certain disavowals:

1. *It recognizes that the conduct of negotiations is a technical matter on which bodies concerned about general directions toward peace cannot usefully recommend.*

2. *It does not wish to be understood as preaching moral obligations to the nations concerned with Middle Eastern issues, in light of the centuries of anti-Semitism and in particular in the light of Western treatment of the Jewish people in this century, and the long history of Crusades and colonial subjugation of the Arab peoples.*

3. *It does not wish to be understood to be speaking for the Christians of the Middle East, however important it considers its own fellowship with them to be, since each body is situated in circumstances widely different from those of any American church body and must speak for itself.*

4. *It does not wish to suggest that any summary treatment of the complex life and political clashes of the Middle Eastern peoples can suffice, but simply to introduce its readers to the scope of the contemporary problem and urge further study...*

Members of the Task Force were: The Rev. Elwyn A. Smith, Ph.D, Chairman, Vice President for Student Affairs, Temple University; Mr. Bruce L. Felknor, Director of Marketing Information, International Division, Encyclopedia Britannica, Council on Church and Society; The Rev. William H. Harter, Pastor: Th.D. candidate at Union Seminary; field: relationship of Rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity; Studies in Israel (Hebrew University) and Jordan (American Schools of Oriental Research) for one year; Co-director, NCC Committee on Status of Jerusalem and Human Rights in the Middle East; Ms. Kathyrn Huenemann, Student WorldRelations Office, Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations; attended American University in Beirut.

Also: The Rev. Raymond V. Kearns, Jr., Associate General Secretary, Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations; Ms. Nancy R. Krasa, Union Theological Seminary, New York; Editor, Union Seminary Quarterly Review; the Rev. John G. Lorimer, Fraternal Worker in the Middle East, Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations; the Rev. James E. Pierce, Pastor: University Heights Presbyterian Church, New York; former Director of the University Christian Center in Beirut; Prof. A. David Ritterspach, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Religion (Old Testament Studies), Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Penna.; Mr. Thomas M. Trent, Council on Church and Society.

The Rev. Charles W. Arbuthnot, Regional Secretary for the Middle East, Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, served as a Permanent Consultant. Staff services were provided by the Rev. Donald J. Wilson, Ph.D., Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, and the Rev. H. Lewish, Department of Church and Society. Mrs. Therese M. Dymski, Department of Church and Society, served as Secretary to the Task Force.

## TWO CATHOLIC VIEWS ON ISRAEL

*[Religious News Service] Two widely divergent assessments of the political and religious situation of Jerusalem, and how American Christians should respond, have been distributed to the Roman Catholic bishops in the U.S.*

*One view, arguing that Israeli administration of East Jerusalem (controlled by Jordan until June 1967) is menacing both Arab and Christian communities, has been advanced by Archbishop Joseph T. Ryan of Anchorage, Alaska.*

*The other, holding that conditions in Jerusalem are better today than they have been for many years, is presented by Father Edward H. Flannery, executive secretary for Catholic-Jewish relations for for the U.S. Catholic Conference....*

*The archbishop's assessment, based in part on a January visit to Jerusalem, responded to a statement by Father Flannery issued to the bishops in October 1971.*

*The Alaskan prelate said his conclusion that the presence of Christianity in Jerusalem is in danger is undisguisable opposition to the position of Father Flannery. Archbishop Ryan was field director for the Pontifical Mission for Palestine from 1958 to 1960 and president of that mission from 1960 to 1966. The archbishop argued that "Israel is quietly but inexorably exerting pressure on Arabs to quit Jerusalem and the occupied "West Bank" (of the Jordan River). And he said that among the Arabs are 180,000 Christians.*

*In early April, Father Flannery released a "Second Report on Jerusalem," in direct rebuttal to Archbishop Ryan. He said that his views in the earlier document were underscored by a January trip to Jerusalem, in the company of Msgr. George G. Higgins, director of the Division for Urban Life for the Catholic Conference....*

*Father Flannery maintained in his second paper that an exodus of Christians from Jerusalem and Israel has been taking place for 100 years and is caused by reasons other than the Israeli administration....*

*Father Flannery contends that "internationalization of the whole city...is unworkable and for a number of reasons undesirable." He claims that while this position was proposed in 1947 by the United Nations and by Pope Pius, it was dropped from U.N. discussions in 1952 and is not supported by Pope Paul....*

*Father Flannery holds that Pope Paul is asking for "functional internationalization" assuring religious rights rather than "territorial" internationalization.*

*Archbishop Ryan would have the American Catholic bishops intervene in the debate over Jerusalem for three reasons: to make clear that "Christianity and Islam are in Jerusalem by right," to make it known that Christianity cannot "accept the ethnic domination of, or the political sovereignty of, one religion over the others," and to demonstrate that Jerusalem is a "Holy City" by the life and death of Jesus as well as by the promise to Abraham.*

*Father Flannery concluded that the role of Christians in Jerusalem is "the pursuit of peace," that is, "reconciliation of Arabs and Jews." He said: "The Christian is best cast in the role of mediator in the Middle East... For this purpose he must bereave himself of his own prejudices and acquire a deep understanding of both sides and both peoples involved in the conflict. Thus far few have transcended the polarities of the situation."*

## STATEMENT BY THE NATIONAL COALITION OF AMERICAN NUNS

Archbishop Ryan's document drew a response from the National Coalition of American Nuns on April 15th, issued by Sister Ann Gillen, member of the Executive Board.

NCAN expressed concern about "the very probable adverse effects" of Archbishop Ryan's document and feared it to be "anti-Semitic by effect, if not intent." The NCAN declared that Archbishop Ryan's focus on the Arab refugee problem "ignores or omits very important points:

1. *The Arab governments are largely responsible for causing the Arab refugee problem because they urged Arabs to flee so that Arab armies might more effectively "eliminate" the Jews;*

2. *The Arab governments have done very little to relieve these refugees, refusing to absorb them into Arab lands, leaving them to be supported by the nations of the world as a festering political problem.*

The NCAN statement declared "that the Jewish people and the State of Israel have made Jerusalem available to all faiths, and never before have the holy places been so well protected and maintained."

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The 8th General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopted four priority issues and within the priorities, a number of goals and objectives calling for study and action by church members, congregations, associations, conferences and national agencies. Among these was the following statement on the Middle East, adopted on June 28, 1971:

> *Goal: To have members of the United Church of Christ understand the needs and aspirations of the Israeli and Arab, particularly Palestinian, peoples, and the issues that divide them, to be sympathetic to all sides and to assist in the achievement of a negotiated peace.*
>
> *Objective 1: To establish procedures throughout the United Church to help members understand the history of the Middle East and the causes and forces that dominate the area; and to develop public support for United Nations and United States government action that will safeguard the aspirations and interests of the people directly affected by the Middle East conflict.*
>
> *Objective 2: To continue present support for programs of relief and rehabilitation for Arab refugees in cooperation with sister churches in the Middle East and to respond to the call of those churches for a program of information and interpretation concerning the cause of the refugee problem.*

*Objective 3: To support those policies of the United States Government which decrease the element of great power rivalry or conflict in the Middle East, recognizing at the same time that all the great powers consider that they have legitimate national interests in the area stemming from a variety of factors: geographic, strategic, and economic.*

AMERICAN BAPTIST CONVENTION

The American Baptist Convention, meeting in Minneapolis May 12-16, 1971, adopted a resolution on the Middle East which pointed to some critical problems requiring agreement by all sides. Among these were:

1. *A pledge by all sides to continue indefinitely the cease fire....*

2. *Intensification of ...discussions concerning the security of all countries in the Middle East. Fear and insecurity exists among Arab countries as well as with Israel. For more than 20 years the Israelis have sought Arab recognition of their right to national existence....the Arab countries feel threatened by the continued Israeli occupation of several thousand square miles of Arab land....*

3. *Further progress is needed in defusing the boundary question....The Israeli concern for defendable boundaries is very understandable, for the vulnerability of its population is obvious. But questions of justice for large numbers of Arabs are also equally important....Only those borders which are accepted by a majority of both Arabs and Israelis will be safe for all....*

4. *Urgent progress is needed in response to the plight of more than one million Palestinian refugees and the refugees created by the 1967 war... Eventually this program must move from a relief basis to finding a permanent solution which gives effective recognition to the Palestinian right to full self determination and settlement or repatriation in a land of their choosing.*

5. *Progress is needed in finding a pattern for joint Arab-Israeli responsibility for a government of Jerusalem that will guarantee the religious rights of all.*

EDITORIAL BY "WORLD CALL"

World Call , a publication of the Disciples of Christ, published an editorial in the December 1971 issue, sections of which are excerpted below:

*The peace which the prophets envisioned for Jerusalem has been long in coming, but it can be achieved in our time if the world will accept the realities of history and understand the unique character of Judaism...*

*Jewish control of Jerusalem has provoked a new political crisis. Fortunately, the battle has been largely in the halls of the United Nations and not in the streets of a city which has already seen too much blood through the centuries. Violent words are always to be preferred over bullets.*

*The tragedy, however, is that some of Israel's long-time friends are beginning to desert or to remain silent as the debate intensifies. Arab militants, who have continually opposed the Jewish presence in the Middle East, now find some surprising new allies who echo the cry for Israeli withdrawal.*

*A few Christian groups, most notably the Quakers, have deplored Zionist "expansionism" and Jewish "occupation" of the Old City. The Vatican, usually sympathetic to Israel, has expressed a vague fear that the historic pluralistic religious character of Jerusalem will be obliterated by Orthodox zealots. Soviet strategists have taken advantage of the climate of confusion and anxiety to make further inroads among the Arabs and to divert attention from their own brutal persecution of Russian Jewry.*

*Solutions to the Middle East turmoil are, admittedly, difficult to produce. But it must be obvious, as U.S. Ambassador George Bush told the U.N. Security Council, that there is no answer to be found in attempting to turn the calendar back to 1948 or 1967. Israel exists no longer as a Zionist dream but as a strong, vigorous and heroically self-conscious and proud young nation. Further, after achieving a homeland at high human cost and with U.N. backing, the Israeli will never yield what they feel is theirs by religious and political right.*

*As for Jerusalem, no people have a better right to claim this city as their capital than do the Jews. Through the centuries of recorded history, Jerusalem has been central in the life of*

*Judaism, the focus of prayers and the spiritual home of a scattered people. Having now established control over the whole city -- and with it at last the sacred Wailing Wall in the Old City -- the Israeli will not readily relinquish it. Both the friends and enemies of Israel will do well to recognize this fact.*

*A visitor to Jerusalem today soon discovers the falsity of charges made by those who fear for the future of Christian life in the city. The historic shrines have been maintained and even enhanced in appearance and accessibility, and the small Christian population of the city has grown a bit over the past four years. Much of the bitter squabbling among rival Christian groups has ended.*

*Under Jordanian control, the old sector of Jerusalem was in decay; under Israeli direction, there is a rebirth of vitality and a budding prosperity. Certainly there is no truth at all to the claim that Arabs, whether Christian or Muslim, are being ousted from the city or that the Jews are impeding free access to the holy places....*

*Peace is still possible in the Middle East if men will at least accept history, both secular and sacred, and move forward. Even the seemingly hopeless refugee problem could be solved if Arab leaders would come to terms with reality and seek some answer other than the destruction of the Jews and the restoration of the pre-1948 boundaries.*

*Christians of the West can best assist the cause of peace in the Middle East by seeking to learn the truth about the situation there and by endeavoring to understand Jewish aspirations. Christian and Jewish history is so tragically and providentially intertwined as to leave no room for misunderstanding and alienation.*

## SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

*Christian Churches Support Soviet Jewry*, by Rabbi A. James Rudin. (Text of syndicated broadcast) December 8, 1971. (Single copy free)

*Christian Reactions to the Middle East Crisis: New Agenda for Interreligious Dialogue*, by Judith Hershcopf Banki. [The American Jewish Committee, 1967] 25¢

*Christian Reactions to the Leningrad Trial of Soviet Jews.* [Reprinted from *Congressional Record*, May 26, 1971] (Single copy free)

*Christians Speak Out on Recent Trials of Soviet Jews.* [Reprinted from *Congressional Record*, August 4, 1971] (Single copy free)

*Christians Support Unified Jerusalem.* [The American Jewish Committee] 25¢

*Portrait of the Elder Brother*, by Gerald S. Strober. Introduction by Professor Jaroslav Pelikan. [The American Jewish Committee and The National Conference of Christians and Jews, 1972.] 75¢

*Report on National Interreligious Consultation on Soviet Jewry*, [March 19-20, 1972, Chicago, Ill.] (Single copy free)

*Statement on Jerusalem*, by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum. (Presented to the Near East Sub-committee of the House of Foreign Affairs Committee, Washington, D.C.) July 28, 1971. (Single copy free)

*Vatican Council II Statement on the Jews: Five Years Later.* [The American Jewish Committee, February 1971.] 25¢

*Copies of the above are available from*

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